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The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group Issues National Alert on Predatory Astrology Apps and Social Media Scams

NEW DELHI, INDIA — March 2026 — The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group today issued a national consumer advisory warning the public about a massive surge in financial fraud and psychological manipulation within India's ₹60,000 crore digital astrology industry.

Following a comprehensive, months-long investigation into consumer grievances across platforms like Trustpilot, MouthShut, and national cybercrime portals, the Watchdog Group has identified systemic deceptive practices used by major "astro-tech" platforms and independent social media actors.

Key Findings of the Investigation:

1. **The "Bait and Switch" Tactic:** Consumers are routinely lured into paying premium fees (often ₹7,000 to ₹8,000) under the guise of consulting with renowned master astrologers (such as those advertised by platforms like Lunar Astro). However, reports indicate users are frequently handed off to anonymous, inexperienced junior staff who provide generic, unhelpful advice.
2. **Fear-Mongering and Extortion:** The investigation highlights a disturbing trend of astrologers diagnosing fabricated "curses" or "doshas" to induce panic in vulnerable clients. This fear is then monetized through the aggressive upselling of expensive rituals, gemstones, and follow-up sessions.
3. **Social Media Fraud:** The Group highlighted recent police reports where victims lost between ₹2 Lakh and ₹6 Lakh to "Instagram astrologers" who promised guaranteed life solutions, only to abscond with the funds or threaten the victims when confronted.
4. **Review Manipulation:** Evidence suggests widespread use of fake reviews and purchased followers to artificially inflate the credibility of these platforms, burying legitimate consumer complaints.

Statement from The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group: *"Faith and spirituality are deeply personal, but the corporate exploitation of vulnerable individuals in crisis is a severe consumer rights violation. These platforms operate in a regulatory blind spot, using psychological manipulation to drain the savings of desperate people. We are calling*

on the Ministry of Consumer Affairs to immediately investigate these deceptive marketing practices and enforce strict transparency laws."

Consumer Advisory: The Watchdog Group advises all consumers to:

- **Never pay for fear:** If an astrologer uses scare tactics regarding your future or past lives, terminate the session immediately.
- **Verify the Expert:** Demand in writing the exact name and qualifications of the person conducting your consultation before paying.
- **Do Not Fund Rituals Online:** Never transfer large sums of money via UPI to social media accounts for "guaranteed" religious rituals or problem resolution.

Consumers who believe they have been defrauded are urged to report the incident immediately to the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (cybercrime.gov.in) and their respective banking institutions.

About The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group: The Digital Consumer Watchdog Group is an independent research and advocacy collective dedicated to exposing digital fraud, protecting consumer rights, and promoting transparency in India's rapidly expanding tech ecosystems.

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